In July 2012 the Secretary-General’s UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign proclaimed every 25th of the month as Orange Day. Initiated and led by the UNiTE campaign’s Global Youth Network, worldwide activities implemented on this day by UN country offices and civil society organizations strive to highlight issues relevant to preventing and ending violence against women and girls, not only once a year, on 25 November (the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), but every month.

In 2013, the UNiTE campaign focused its Orange Days on highlighting recommendations of the agreed conclusions of the 57th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW57), which focused on the theme of the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. Orange Day highlighted issues including safe schools, safe work places and cyber space as a safe space for women and girls. Activities culminated in a call to ‘Orange the World in 16 Days’ from November 25 and throughout the 16 Days of Activism. The Call resulted in ‘orange activities’ in over 50 countries and over 76 million people being reached through social media.

In 2014, UNiTE campaign Orange Day continues to call for actions around the world on specific themes and issues towards ending all forms of violence against women and girls. This month, UNiTE #OrangeDay will focus on ‘Creating Safe and Empowering Public Spaces with and for Women and Girls’.

SAFE AND EMPOWERING PUBLIC SPACES WITH AND FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in public spaces is an everyday occurrence for women and girls around the world and is a violation of women’s human rights. Women and girls experience various types of sexual violence in public spaces including sexual harassment, rape, and femicide. This violence may take place on the street, on public transport, in parks, in and around schools, places of employment, and other public spaces in urban and rural areas. Few laws or policies are in place
to prevent and address sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women and girls in public spaces.

Violence and the fear of violence reduces women and girls’ freedom of movement and rights to access education, work, recreation, and essential services. It also restricts their participation in political life, and often limiting their participation in national, regional and global advocacy and policy exchange fora.

**INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES AND INITIATIVES**

At the global level, ongoing processes and upcoming events provide important opportunities to highlight the right of women and girls to safe public spaces and push for concrete change.

*Habitat III*, which will take place in 2016, is the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. It will focus on building a "New Urban Agenda”. Objectives for the conference are to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable urban develop and will be a space for parliamentarians, organizations of the United Nations system and others to come together to assess accomplishments to date and identify and address new and emerging challenges. Habitat III provides the opportunity to discuss how cities, towns and villages are planned taking into consideration the safety and security of women and girls.

The current global development framework, the *Millennium Development Goals*, is due to reach its end date in 2015 and a process is underway to identify and shape the priorities of the new framework, the Sustainable Development Goals. The UNiTE campaign is advocating for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls to be a key priority in the new framework. Violence against women and girls in public spaces and ensuring that public spaces are safe and empowering for women must be prioritized in these processes, and women must be able to participate in these important discussions.

**ORANGE DAY ACTIVITIES (25th October)**

This month, the UNiTE campaign’s Orange Day will focus on “Safe and Empowering Public Spaces with and for Women and Girls”.

**What can you do?**

- Organize a discussion with members of your community on the opportunities that safe and empowering public spaces with and for women and girls can bring. Talk about the issues that can affect women and girls’ rights to public spaces, and how they can be addressed in
partnership with municipal governments, women’s grassroots and organizations, youth, media, research organizations, UN Agencies, the private sector and others.

- Share information with your municipality on tools and strategies that can help ensure that public spaces are gender sensitive and safe for all. Share information about UN Women’s Global Safe Cities Initiative, and other resources suggested below.

**SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES**

**Twitter**
- On 25 Oct, #OrangeDay #UNiTE campaign says make public spaces safe with & for women&girls. http://owl.li/mlJkg v @SayNO_UNiTE

- Happy #OrangeDay! This month #UNiTE emphasizes safe public spaces with & for women&girls. Share your local initiatives! Via @SayNO_UNiTE

- Today is #UNiTE #OrangeDay! Talk about the prevention of #sexualharassment in public spaces. http://owl.li/mlJkg V @SayNO_UNiTE #endSH

- Today is #OrangeDay! Wear orange & #UNiTE to support action on safe and empowering spaces for all http://owl.li/mlJkg v @SayNO_UNiTE

- Ahead of #HabitatIII 2016, this #OrangeDay, #UNiTE calls for end to #VAW & girls in public spaces. http://owl.li/mlJkg v @SayNO_UNiTE

- On 25 Oct, #OrangeDay, #UNiTE says #SDGs must prioritize safe public spaces for women & girls. http://owl.li/mlJkg via @SayNO_UNiTE

**Sample Facebook messages**
- Happy #OrangeDay! This month’s action theme highlights the need for safe and empowering public spaces with and for Women and Girls. Start a conversation with your community to talk about issues that affect women and girls’ right to enjoy safe public spaces and how they can be addressed. Invite municipal leaders, youth groups, media, private sector partners, women’s organizations and others to participate. http://owl.li/mlJkg
The UNiTE campaign has declared the 25th of each month as #OrangeDay – a day of action to end all forms of violence against women and girls. This month we are highlighting ‘Safe Public Space for and with Women and Girls’.

Learn more about ongoing global processes to reclaim public space and advance women and girls’ rights to safe public spaces.

Share tools and strategies that can help ensure that public spaces are gender sensitive and safe for all.

http://owl.li/mUkg

Resources

- UN Women: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces#sthash.5QF0bT9f.dpuf
- Video Clip from Port Moresby Safe City Programme, Papua New Guinea: http://ow.ly/i4Rlj
- Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls: http://www.endvawnow.org
- Action Aid International: http://www.actionaid.org/
- Delhi Rising, Delhi Safe City Programme http://www.unwomensouthasia.org/2012/delhi-lights-up-2/
- Huairou Commission: http://huairou.org/
- Red Mujer y Hábitat de América Latina: http://www.redmujer.org.ar/
- Harassmap: http://harassmap.org/
- Jagori: http://jagori.org/
- Stop Street harassment: http://www.stopstreetharassment.org/
- The Population Council, a grantee of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, is implementing a project in Guatemala to empower indigenous young women as agents of change in their communities, which involves safety mapping of public spaces. Watch the video: http://vimeo.com/52826888
- Project for Public Spaces: http://www.pps.org/
International Centre for the Prevention of Crime: Women's Safety: a universal concern